

NewsCOR

Raleigh's Weekly Newsgram



NEUSE RIVER SOLAR FARM A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT OF FOUR PARTNERS

The idea of developing a solar array at the City of Raleigh's Neuse River Wastewater Treatment Plant was first hatched in 2008. The City would join forces with three energy companies to bring the project to completion, culminating with today's opening celebration of the Neuse River Solar Farm.

The solar farm, sitting on 10 acres at the wastewater treatment plant in southeastern Wake County, is the largest utility-scale solar power project to be located on local government property in the state of North Carolina. The partners in the project with the City of Raleigh are NxGen Power, Southern Energy Management and Progress Energy Carolinas.

NxGen Power of Charlotte owns and operates the Neuse River Solar Farm and sells the output to Raleigh-based Progress Energy Carolinas for distribution to its customers. Southern Energy Management of Morrisville designed, engineered and constructed the solar array. The City of Raleigh provided land for the project under a lease agreement. No capital from the City of Raleigh was used for the solar array. The City has the option to purchase the solar farm after seven years, according to terms of the lease agreement.

The 1.3-megawatt Neuse River Solar Farm is expected to generate approximately 1.7 million kilowatt-hours of electricity per year, roughly the equivalent to the annual energy use of about 130 homes in North Carolina. The project is anticipated to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by more than 1,300 metric tons annually.

Building on Raleigh's commitment to being a leader in sustainability concepts such as renewable energy, the City's Public Utilities Department in 2008 began looking into the feasibility of locating a solar array at the Neuse River Wastewater Treatment Plant. At the same time, Progress Energy Carolinas had started soliciting development proposals for renewal energy projects. The utility sought the proposals in response to the state's 2007 energy law mandating renewable energy and conservation.



- Neuse River Solar Farm A Collaborative Effort Of Four Partners
- Solar Energy Fuels Many City Of Raleigh Projects
- Human Relations Commission Names Four Winners Of Annual Awards
- Theatre In The Park: A Raleigh Tradition
- Comprehensive Planning Committee To Review Hillsborough Street Resurfacing Options
- City Set To Launch Chavis Park Community Conversation
- U.S. 1 Corridor Study Public Meeting Set For March 6
- Public Hearing Set For March 6 For Leesville Widening Project
- More Than 8,000 Participating In NC Department of Revenue Debt Payment Program
- Follow The City Of Raleigh On Twitter & Facebook
- Traffic Alerts

Three firms submitted solar energy project proposals for the Neuse River Wastewater Treatment Plant. After an evaluation process, Progress Energy Carolinas accepted NxGen Power's and Southern Energy Management's proposal for a solar array. Construction of the Neuse River Solar Farm began last fall.

The U.S. solar energy industry continues to be one of the fastest-growing sectors of the economy, according to the Solar Energy Industries Association and GTM Research. In North Carolina, 228 firms with activities in the solar energy sector account for approximately 1,900 full-time equivalent positions, or 13 percent of the state's estimated 14,800 clean energy industry jobs. The greater Wake County region boasts the most clean energy firm offices of any county in North Carolina with nearly 400 reported clean energy establishments. This was accomplished in response to a high demand for renewable energy and energy efficiency initiatives in the Triangle region. The City of Raleigh has been involved in other solar energy projects, in addition to the Neuse River Solar Farm.

Construction of the Neuse River Solar Farm created 14 local jobs. The City of Raleigh has an option to purchase the solar array in the future.

ABOUT NXGEN POWER:

NxGen Power, LLC is a developer and operator of renewable energy facilities. NxGen Power uses strategic partnerships and institutional investors to help utility, government, school and commercial customers meet their renewable energy goals without the upfront cost. The company works to educate and to provide customers the opportunity to harness the power of the sun through the use of solar energy and other innovative technologies. For more information, visit www.nxgenpower.com.

ABOUT PROGRESS ENERGY:

Progress Energy is a Fortune 500 energy company. It includes two major electric utilities that serve about 3.1 million customers in the Carolinas and Florida. The company is pursuing a balanced strategy for a secure energy future, which includes aggressive energy-efficiency programs, investments in renewable energy technologies and a state-of-the-art electricity system. For more information, visit www.progress-energy.com.

ABOUT SOUTHERN ENERGY MANAGEMENT:

Southern Energy Management is a North Carolina-based sustainable energy company. It offers energy efficiency, green building and turn-key solar services for homeowners, builders, companies, government and military clients across the country. Southern Energy Management is consistently recognized as an industry leader both locally and nationally, and is one of a handful of companies in the United States to earn the National Energy Star Partner of the Year award five times. For more information, visit www.southern-energy.com.

SOLAR ENERGY FUELS MANY CITY OF RALEIGH PROJECTS

Since 1985, the City of Raleigh has been committed to harnessing sunlight as an alternative energy source for buildings, street lights and other venues. Today's opening celebration of the Neuse River Solar Farm is just the latest solar powered project involving the City. Here are some of the others:

- Rooftop solar photovoltaic array at the City's E.M. Johnson Water Treatment Plant off of Falls of Neuse Road. This 250-kilowatt solar array on top of the water treatment plant's clearwell building produces an estimated 325,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity per year, roughly equivalent to the energy use of 25 homes in North Carolina. This also is the equivalent to reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 230 metric tons annually. Durham-based Carolina Solar Energy owns and operates the solar array and sells the renewable energy produced by the project to Progress Energy Carolinas for distribution to its customers. The City of Raleigh is leasing the rooftop space to Carolina Solar Energy for the solar array. No City capital is involved in this project;
- Rooftop solar array at the City's Brentwood Road Operations Center. The array was installed by Southern Energy Management of Morrisville, and is owned by the City of Raleigh. This 30-kilowatt project produces about 74,000-kilowatt-hours of electricity a year, equivalent to the energy use of about six North Carolina homes. The renewable energy produced by the solar array is sold to Progress Energy Carolinas for distribution to its customers. The Brentwood Road Operations Center also has more efficient LED lighting, including solar-powered LED lights;
- Two rooftop solar arrays at the City's new Wilders Grove Solid Waste Services Operations Center on Beacon Lake Drive, which was formally opened last month. A 50-kilowatt array is located at the administration building; a second array, this one a 25-kilowatt facility, is at a vehicle wash building. Combined, the two solar arrays produce approximately 103,500-kilowatt-hours of electricity per year. This is equivalent to the energy use of about eight North Carolina homes. The two arrays, owned by the City and developed by Sundance Power Systems of Weaverville, are expected to provide a minimum of 12.5 percent of the two buildings' energy use. Plans call for any excess renewable energy generated by the two solar arrays to be sold to Progress Energy Carolinas for distribution to its customers;
- Rooftop solar array at the Raleigh Convention Center, a City of Raleigh facility. This project is currently under construction, with completion scheduled in April. The 500-kilowatt solar array will be the second largest convention center solar array in the nation, covering about 60 percent of the roof of Raleigh's Downtown convention center. It is expected to produce 750,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity each year, roughly equivalent to the annual energy use of about 70 homes in North Carolina. The team of FLS Energy and PowerWorks

Electric is the solar array's developer, owner and operator. FLS Energy, based in Asheville, and PowerWorks Electric of Mooresville are leasing the convention center rooftop space from the City to operate the solar array. Progress Energy Carolinas will purchase renewable energy produced by the solar array and distribute it to the utility's customers;

- The City owns small solar arrays at the Annie Louise Wilkerson, M.D., Nature Preserve Park off of Raven Ridge Road and at three bus stop shelters. The bus stop shelters are located on Capital Boulevard near the Spring Forest Road intersection, on Capital Boulevard at the Calvary Drive intersection, and at the City's Transit Operations Center, 4104 Poole Road. The renewable energy produced by the solar array at the nature preserve park is sold to Progress Energy Carolinas for distribution to its customers. The renewable energy produced from the solar arrays at the bus stop shelters is used by the City for lighting and message signs at the shelters;
- Solar thermal hot water heating systems have been installed at five City of Raleigh fire stations. Four of the systems were installed by Sundance Power Systems of Weaverville and the remaining system was put in by Petra Engineering in Charlotte. The systems heat water at the fire stations. A solar thermal system placed on the roof of the Municipal Building in 1985 still produces hot water for City government's Downtown administration building;
- Two solar-powered charging stations for electric vehicles have been installed at 616 S. Salisbury Street in a City-owned parking lot near the Raleigh Convention Center. PowerWorks Electric, headquartered in Mooresville, designed and installed the charging stations, which were unveiled in December. Progress Energy Carolinas and the City of Raleigh teamed up for this two-year research and development project involving the charging stations. Progress Energy Carolinas and the City use the stations to charge their respective fleets of plug-in electric vehicles. The charging stations are not available for public use. However, the City has installed 18 non-solar powered charging stations throughout Raleigh that are available for public use;
- Also just outside the Raleigh Convention Center is the Big Belly Solar Trash Compactor at the corner of Salisbury Street and Lenoir Street. The compactor is powered by solar energy and holds four times as much trash as regular containers. An electronic chip installed in the compactor notifies the City's Solid Waste Services Department when it becomes full, saving cost, staff time and vehicle emissions; and,
- The City of Raleigh was the first North Carolina municipality to install solar-powered LED street lights. These lights are located in City Plaza and in the parking lot at Campbell University's Law School, both Downtown, and at the City's Marsh Creek Park Operations Facility off of New Hope Road. The solar powered-LED street lights were manufactured by Progress Solar Solutions, a local company that is not affiliated with Progress Energy Carolinas.



These solar energy initiatives are part of the City of Raleigh's commitment to sustainability concepts, innovation and partnerships with the private sector to build stronger clean energy technology in the Capital City. These projects help create local jobs. For more information, contact the City of Raleigh Office of Sustainability at 996-3840 or visit the City's website at www.raleighnc.gov.

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION NAMES FOUR WINNERS OF ANNUAL AWARDS

A student who mentors others, a group of Harley-Davidson motorcycle riders, the founder of a Raleigh ministry and an organization that sponsors special events for seniors have been named recipients of the City of Raleigh Human Relations Commission's annual awards.

The winners of the Human Relations Awards were honored Feb. 9 at the Human Relations Commission's 23rd Annual Awards Banquet at the McKimmon Center. The commission selected the award-winners for their contributions to positive human relations in the Raleigh.

Receiving the annual awards were:

- **Desir'ee Dunn**, a student at Wake Early College of Health and Sciences. She tutors other young people and is starting her own mentoring program called Youth Against the Odds. She also volunteers at hospitals, child-care facilities, her church and other organizations;
- **Raleigh Harley Owners Group**, a motorcycle-riding club celebrating its 25th anniversary. Over the past five years, the organization has donated more than \$144,000 to community organizations serving children, veterans and others in need. The Raleigh Harley Owners Group, which has 457 members, also supports food drives and collects hygiene items for soldiers deployed in the Middle East;
- **Dr. Frank Summerfield**, founder and pastor of Word of God Fellowship, a ministry that includes a day-care center and Christian academy. Dr. Summerfield is a former assistant professor of health and physical therapy at Shaw University and former superintendent of recreation for the City of Raleigh; and,

- **Angels in Aprons**, an organization started in 2007 by Executive Director Stephanie Young. Angels in Aprons holds church services and holiday programs for underserved seniors and residents of nursing homes. The organization's goal is to enrich the lives of seniors and to demonstrate that those in every season of life deserve respect.

The City of Raleigh Human Relations Commission sponsors the annual awards as part of its effort to promote activities that enhance human dignity, equal opportunity, mutual respect and harmony among Raleigh residents. Commission members are volunteers who are appointed by the City Council.

The City of Raleigh Community Services Department helps coordinate the work of the Human Relations Commission. To learn more about the Human Relations Commission or its annual awards, contact Marionna Poke-Stewart at marionna.poke-stewart@raleighnc.gov or 996-6100.

THEATRE IN THE PARK: A RALEIGH TRADITION

Every December, generations of Raleigh area families make it a point to see Theatre In The Park's production of "A Christmas Carol" with legendary actor Ira David Wood III. The show has become an institution for decades and will continue to be a tradition for future generations to enjoy.

However, there is more to Theatre In The Park than its popular Christmas production. The internationally acclaimed company presents a wide range of comedy, contemporary drama, musicals and Shakespearean plays throughout the year at its indoor 240-seat venue, the Ira David Wood III Pullen Park Theatre. The theatre is located on the northern end of Pullen Park at 107 Pullen Road. Theatre In The Park also offers classes and workshops. More than 40,000 people attend programming at Theatre In The Park.

"One thing I have to constantly tell people, especially newcomers to the area, is that we are indoors," said a smiling Brent Simpson, program marketing director at Theatre In The Park. "They will call during the winter and ask, 'Ok, what should I do (to stay warm) if I come to a play.' I tell them we are not outdoors but we are an indoor facility with heat. We have a very strong following."

Theatre In The Park has been awarded the Raleigh Medal of Arts, the City's highest arts honor. Mr. Wood himself is the only two-time winner of the Medal of Arts.

Originally chartered in 1947, Theatre In The Park began as The Children's Theatre of Raleigh Inc. In the early 1970s, the name was changed to Theatre In The Park to reflect its expanded programming, location and new home in the former National Guard Armory building in historic Pullen Park. In 2004, the building was renamed to honor Mr. Wood, who serves as the theatre's executive and artistic director.

Theatre In The Park first performed "A Christmas Carol" in 1974 in the Pullen Park Theatre before moving to its current performance location at the more spacious Memorial Auditorium in Downtown Raleigh. A 40th anniversary celebration of the production will take place in 2014. Details are being worked out but the play may be taken on the road to other venues in the South, Mr. Simpson said. Of course, there will be performances in hometown Raleigh.

The mission of Theatre In the Park organization is:

"To provide a quality theatre experience to a diverse audience base in Raleigh and the surrounding areas. Further, to offer the public an opportunity to see and participate in high quality dramatic classes and productions. Theatre In The Park's mission also includes involving the community in the creation and development of live theatre to nurture a general appreciation and respect for the arts."

"We want the community to not just come out and see the arts but to participate in the arts," Mr. Simpson said.

Though not everyone is suited to be an actor or playwright, there are many roles people can play to help advance the arts. Like many other arts organizations and agencies in the Capital City, Theatre In The Park is supported by a countless number of volunteers who build sets, serve as ushers or do other duties to help out.

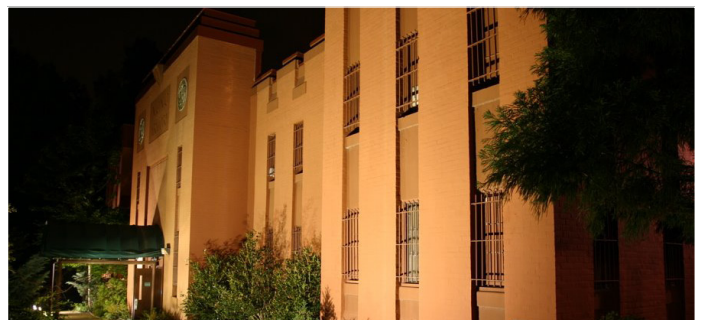
"We could not function without our volunteers," Mr. Simpson said. "They play a vital role in all of this and do so much for the theatre."

Theatre In the Park has a volunteer board of directors and eight paid full-time staff members. It is funded in part by the City of Raleigh. In the City's current budget, which fully funds the arts at \$4.50 per capita, \$39,500 is allocated to Theatre In The Park. Also over the years, the City has leased the theatre building to the organization for a nominal fee of \$1 a year.

"We very much appreciate the City funding," Mr. Simpson said. "We couldn't operate without it."

A non-profit organization, Theatre In the Park also receives funding support from corporations and individuals.

For more information about Theatre In The Park, including programming and upcoming events, call 831-6936 or visit www.theatreinthepark.com.





COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE TO REVIEW HILLSBOROUGH STREET RESURFACING OPTIONS

The Raleigh City Council's Comprehensive Planning Committee will review restriping and pavement marking options for Hillsborough Street between Woodburn Road and Park Avenue. This summer, the City of Raleigh is scheduled to begin resurfacing this portion of Hillsborough Street. City staff has identified a number of options for the restriping and pavement markings along the street and has met with the public to determine what the most reasonable options are. The section of Hillsborough Street currently supports more than 17,000 vehicles traveling the area each day and has substantial bicycle and pedestrian activity. The corridor is also served by multiple bus routes provided by Capital Area Transit and by Triangle Transit.

Currently, this section of Hillsborough Street has five lanes, with two travel lanes in each direction and a continuous center turn lane. Two main options are under consideration by the City. The first would involve one travel lane in each direction with a continuous center turn lane and would feature on-street parking on both sides of the street. Shared lane markings, also known as "sharrows," would be placed in the travel lanes. The option is favored by the Cameron Village Neighborhood Association. The second option, favored by the City of Raleigh's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission would also have one travel lane in each direction and a center turn-lane. However, on-street parking would be included only on one side of the street, which leaves enough room to include dedicated, striped bicycle lanes on both sides of the street.

The Comprehensive Planning Committee will also discuss the possibility of moving a pedestrian crosswalk from an area near the Velvet Cloak Inn to the area in front of the YMCA. The committee next meets on Feb. 29 in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

CITY SET TO LAUNCH CHAVIS PARK COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

The City of Raleigh plans to kick off Chavis Park Community Conversation in March. The goal of the 12-month project is to reach consensus on shared interests and identify options for additional amenities and improvements at Chavis Park. The program also is designed to develop a "mutual understanding and respect for both the history and future of the park and the role of the park in the community."

The City is working on developing a schedule of project activities.

In January, City Council members unanimously approved a consultant contract with Skeo Solutions for the Chavis Park Community Conversation project. The contract amount is not to exceed \$199,261. Skeo Solutions will design and implement the Chavis Park Community Conversation project to include activities that will result in an adoptable revised master plan for Chavis Park.

For more information, contact City of Raleigh Park Planner Cassie Schumacher-Georgopoulos at 996-4797 or email cassie.schumacher-georgopoulos@raleighnc.gov.

U.S. 1 CORRIDOR STUDY PUBLIC MEETING SET FOR MARCH 6

The North Carolina Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization will hold a public hearing on March 6 in Franklinton to discuss the proposed U.S. 1 Corridor Study from Park Avenue in Youngsville to the Vance County Line.

The meeting will include a short presentation on the study, a community character survey, and information stations. The meeting will be held from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Old Franklinton High School auditorium located at 3 North Main Street.

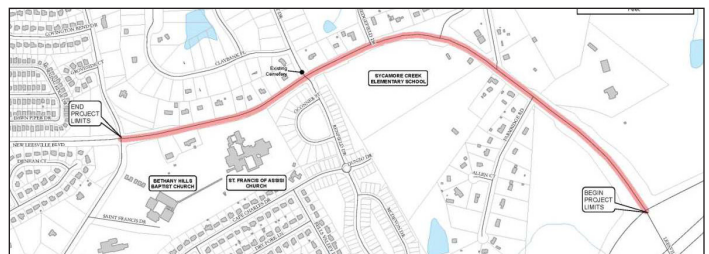
For more information, call Michael Fendrick, consultant for the North Carolina Capital Area Metro Planning Organization at 836-4053 or by email at fendrick@pbworld.com.

PUBLIC HEARING SET FOR MARCH 6 FOR LEESVILLE WIDENING PROJECT

A public hearing will be held on March 6 to consider improvements related to the Leesville Road widening project. A meeting was held on Dec. 7, 2011 to present design information and preliminary right-of-way and easements needs for the widening of Leesville Road from I-540 to New Leesville Boulevard. The March 6 meeting will discuss the final authorization of the project.

The project will widen the road to a minimum of four lanes throughout and include five-foot wide bicycle lanes, curb and gutter, and sidewalks on both sides. It will also include a raised landscaped median.

The public hearing will be held at 7p.m. in Council Chambers.



MORE THAN 8,000 PARTICIPATING IN NC DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE DEBT PAYMENT PROGRAM

Waiving Fees Helps NC Families Get Back On Sound Financial Footing

More than 8,000 taxpayers have signed up for the North Carolina Department of Revenue's Individual Income Tax Debt Payment Program—less than a month after Gov. Bev Perdue announced the launch of the initiative, which was created to help individuals catch up on unpaid taxes.

The time-limited program offers individuals the chance to get back on their feet financially by waiving certain penalties and fees and offering payment plan options. Participating taxpayers can avoid forced collections such as garnishments, liens, and levies.

Eligible taxpayers can opt for easy payment plans and potentially save as much as 35 to 40 percent by participating in the program. Those already enrolled are saving \$4 million in fee and penalty waivers.

"This is exactly the type of program we need to help our fellow North Carolinians down the path to economic recovery," said Gov. Bev Perdue said last month. "We are making it easier for our citizens to work with state government."

The debt payment program ends April 30, 2012.

Any taxpayer who has properly filed their tax returns with NCDOR and has received a notice for unpaid taxes prior to January 1, 2012, may participate. A taxpayer who has not filed a return, does not currently have an outstanding tax liability or is the subject of an ongoing criminal investigation or prosecution is not eligible.

In exchange for a taxpayer paying the balance of tax and interest owed by April 30th, NCDOR will waive certain, unpaid civil penalties and fees.

"We are thrilled with the success of the program thus far and hope to help thousands more taxpayers easily resolve their tax liabilities," said Secretary of Revenue David Hoyle.

Members of the State Employees' Credit Union may also qualify for a low-interest loan program to pay their unresolved tax balances.

Anyone interested in participating should contact the NCDOR local service center nearest them or call 1-877-252-4983. For detailed information about the program, please visit the North Carolina Department of Revenue website.

FOLLOW THE CITY OF RALEIGH ON TWITTER

Looking for the most up-to-date information from the City of Raleigh? Follow your local government via Twitter!

Twitter is a free service that allows you to "follow" people or subjects via short, frequent updates. The City of Raleigh now offers Twitter users the opportunity to stay informed about the latest news and breaking events. To join in, visit www.twitter.com and get started with a few simple steps. Once you have an active account, you can elect to "follow" any of the City's Twitter accounts.

Currently, the City maintains the following accounts:

RaleighGov - This feed features links to any news releases and alerts issued by the City of Raleigh;

RaleighBPAC - This feed features information from the City of Raleigh Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

RaleighParks - This feed features any news and information related to the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation Department;

RalCommServices - City of Raleigh Community Services Department

RW911 - this feed features traffic accidents reported to the Emergency Communications Center.

RaleighGoGreen - this feed features news and information from the City of Raleigh Solid Waste Services Department Recycling program

To follow any of these, simply choose "Find People" from your Twitter home page and type in the account name you are interested in and then click "follow." It's that easy.

CITY OF RALEIGH ON FACEBOOK

City of Raleigh - The main City of Raleigh Facebook page keeps you informed about events, holidays and other news items.

City of Raleigh Planning and Development - The Raleigh Planning and Development page provides guidance for the growth, preservation and development of the City of Raleigh in order to maintain a community of lasting value.

Community Services Department - The Community Services Department Facebook page posts a variety of community and neighborhood news, stories, awards, classes and Citizen Advisory Council information.

Emergency Communications - The Raleigh-Wake County 911 Facebook page posts information on job openings, public engagements and other 911 related happenings.

Like Raleigh Wake County 911 on Facebook

Raleigh Police Department - The Raleigh Police Department Facebook page focuses on public safety. Posts concerning crime alerts, missing people, requests for citizen assistance and more.

TRAFFIC ALERTS

FOR MORE CITY OF RALEIGH NEWS AND UPDATES ON ROAD CLOSURES, PARADES AND ROAD RACES, VISIT THE CITY'S WEBSITE AT WWW.RALEIGHNC.GOV

ROAD RACES

March 3 Traffic will be affected from 8:30 a.m. until 10:30 a.m. near Fletcher Park for a road race.

April 1 Traffic will be affected near the RBC Center for a road race.

April 21 Traffic will be affected downtown from 7 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. for a road race.

Traffic will also be affected for a road race near Quail Corners Shopping Center from 2 p.m. until 3:30 p.m.

STREET CLOSINGS

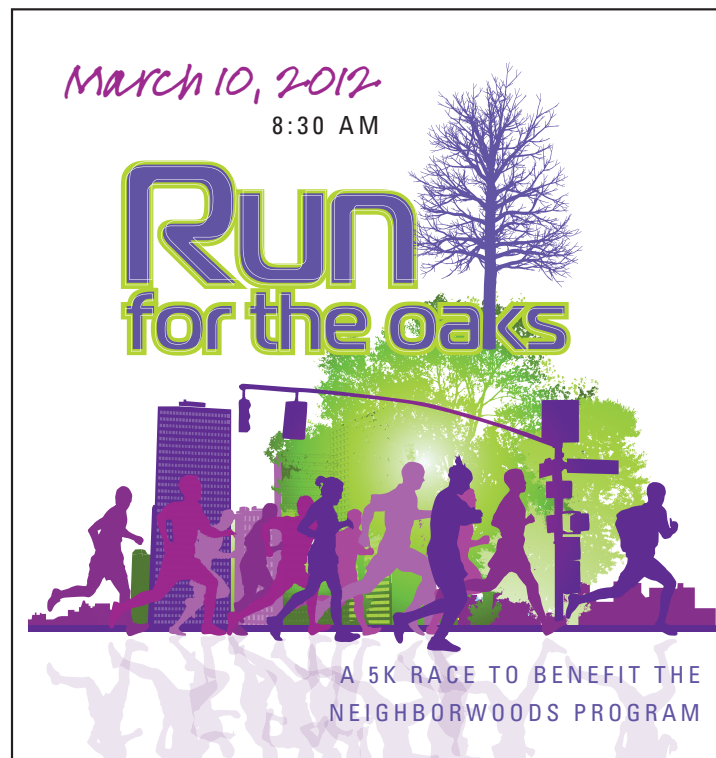
April 28 The service road parallel to Glenwood Avenue from Holly Ridge Road to Oak Park Road will be closed from 6 a.m. until 6 p.m.

PARADES

None at this time, check back next issue.

For information on downtown events visit the Downtown Raleigh Alliance website at www.godowntownraleigh.com and the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau at www.visitraleigh.com.

NewsCOR is also available electronically. Please contact the City of Raleigh Public Affairs Department at 996-3100. If you would prefer to receive NewsCOR by email.



Annual 5K Race through downtown Raleigh

The Run for the Oaks is a 5k race to benefit planting trees in the City of Oaks. The Race is part of the Second Empire Spring 2012 Grand Prix series and the Eastern Carolina Corporate Cup team series.

For more information, contact

Kira Stewart

kira.stewart@raleighnc.gov • 919.870.2911